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6p

THE ENEMY WITHIN



ALSO ON SALE NOW

BATTLE

PICTURE LIBRARY

**No. 617 MADDOCK MUST
DIE**

**No. 618 THE RAILWAY
OF DEATH**

No. 619 THE REBELS

No. 620 SPEARHEAD

**No. 621 ACHTUNG-
MOSQUITO!**

**No. 622 COLOURS
FLYING**

No. 623 CRETE IN FLAMES

**No. 624 HORIZON IN
HELL**

★
8

**ALL ACTION ISSUES
ARE ON SALE
EVERY MONTH**

★



THE ENEMY WITHIN

JUTTING OUT OF THE DARK GREEN CARPET OF JUNGLE THAT STRETCHED AWAY TO THE HORIZON WAS A MOUND OF ROCK, TWO MILES SQUARE. IT WAS CALLED HUK HILL - AND ON IT, A BRITISH BATTALION WAS SLOWLY BLEEDING TO DEATH...



Chapter I. THE COMMANDER

THE TWO R.A.F. DAKOTAS APPROACHING HUK HILL CARRIED A VITAL CARGO OF GURKHA PARATROOPERS. THE FIRST STICK WAS COMMANDED BY LIEUTENANT ROB STUART ...



OUR DROP ZONE'S IN NO MAN'S LAND, SO IT'S UP TO US TO MAKE IT TO OUR TRENCHES BEFORE THE JAPS GET THEIR SIGHTS ON US - RIGHT ?

THE PARAS WERE REINFORCEMENTS FOR THE SORELY DEPLETED GARRISON ON HUK HILL, WHICH WAS ENTIRELY RINGED BY JAPANESE.



THE JOHNNY GURKHAS WILL BE COMING OUT ANY SECOND NOW. STAND TO - BE READY TO GIVE THEM COVERING FIRE !

AT THAT MOMENT, THE GREEN LIGHTS BLINKED IN THE PLANES
AND ROB STUART LED HIS MEN OUT INTO THE EMPTY SKY...

GO !



LESS THAN A MILE AWAY, SLANT EYES WATCHED THE WHITE DOTS
APPEAR IN THE WAKE OF THE AIRCRAFT. THE AXE WAS ABOUT TO FALL.

AT FIXED
RANGE - COMMENCE
FIRE!



FOUR MILES BEYOND, IN A JUNGLE CLEARING, A BATTERY
OF ROCKET GUNS SCREAMED INTO LIFE...



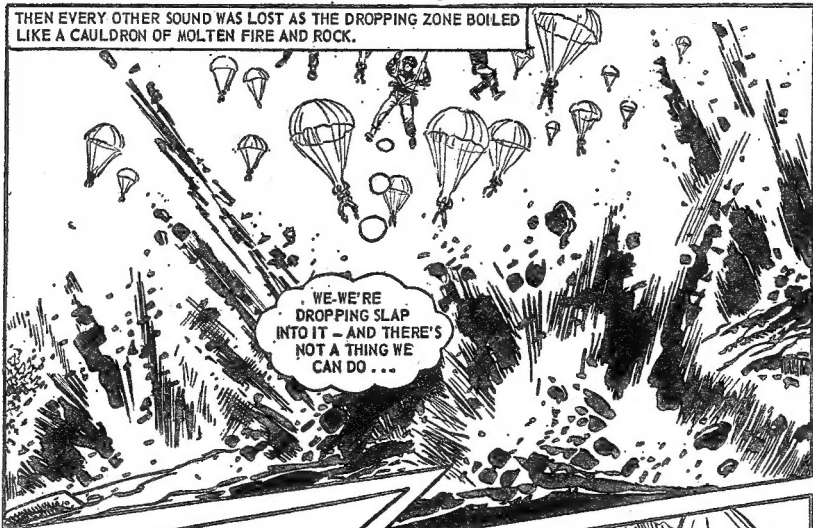
ROB STUART WAS TEN SECONDS FROM THE GROUND WHEN THE TERRIBLE SHRIEKING SOUND FILLED THE AIR.



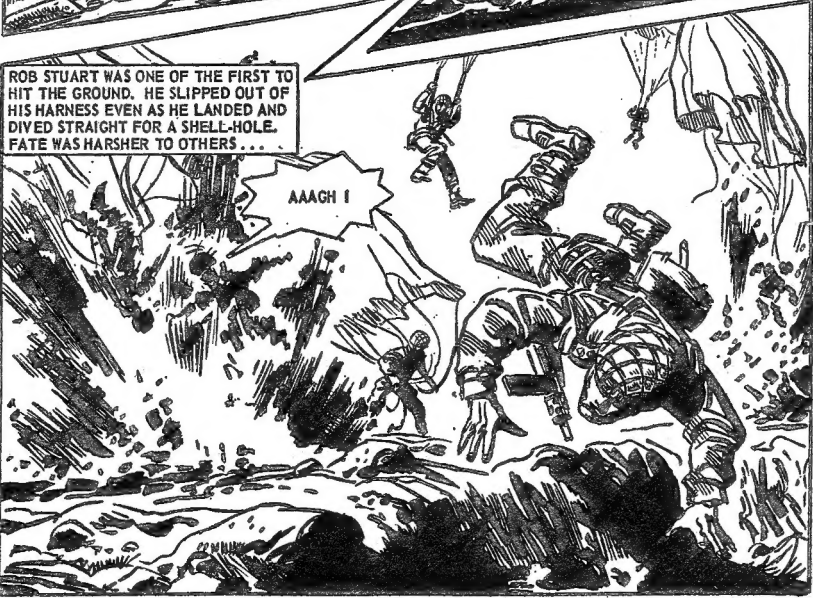
IN THE BRITISH POSITIONS ON THE HILL, THEY KNEW ONLY TOO WELL...



THEN EVERY OTHER SOUND WAS LOST AS THE DROPPING ZONE BOILED LIKE A CAULDRON OF MOLTEN FIRE AND ROCK.



WE-WE'RE
DROPPING SLAP
INTO IT - AND THERE'S
NOT A THING WE
CAN DO ...



ROB STUART WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO
HIT THE GROUND. HE SLIPPED OUT OF
HIS HARNESS EVEN AS HE LANDED AND
DIVED STRAIGHT FOR A SHELL-HOLE.
FATE WAS HARSHER TO OTHERS ...


AAAGH !

A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY, THE MEN IN THE TRENCHES WERE SHOUTING FRANTICALLY TO THE PARAS...

OVER
THIS WAY!
COME ON, LADS
— COME ON!



THE SURVIVORS SPURTED DESPERATELY FOR SAFETY. SINGLY AND IN SMALL GROUPS, THEY SCRAMBLED OVER THE BARBED WIRE FENCES AND INTO THE TRENCHES...



IN YOU
COME, LADS!
QUICK!

ROB STUART HAD SCRAMBLED IN SUPPORTING A WOUNDED MAN. NOW HE TURNED AND LOOKED AT THE FACES OF THE GURKHAS WITH HIM ...

SERGEANT
BANDA - THANK
HEAVENS YOU MADE
IT ! HOW - HOW MANY
OF US ...

THERE - THERE
ARE TWENTY-SEVEN
OF US LEFT, SIR,
YOU ARE THE ONLY
OFFICER ...

AT THAT MOMENT, THE SHELL-FIRE
STOPPED AND A STRANGE, UNEASY
SILENCE TOOK ITS PLACE. ROB
STUART TURNED BITTER EYES OUT
TOWARDS NO MAN'S LAND ...

TWENTY-SEVEN
OF US - OUT OF A
HUNDRED ! THAT - THAT
WAS MURDER ...

A MAN AT ROB'S SHOULDER COUGHED. HE WAS A YOUNG INFANTRY OFFICER, IN CHARGE OF THE TRENCH SECTOR ...

IT'S AS THOUGH THE JAPS KNEW YOU WERE COMING. THEY OPENED UP AT EXACTLY THE RIGHT TIME. BUT - BUT HOW COULD THEY HAVE FOUND OUT ?



AT THAT MOMENT, A RUNNER APPEARED ...

SIR, THE C.O. WOULD LIKE YOU TO REPORT TO HIM IN HIS BUNKER.

VERY WELL. SEE THE MEN ARE SETTLED IN, BANDA. SEE YOU LATER ...



ROB FOLLOWED THE MAN UP THE SLOPES OF THE HILL.

THE DEFENCES LOOK QUITE GOOD, CONSIDERING THERE'S LITTLE MORE THAN A BATTALION HOLDING THE HILL. BY THE LOOKS OF THINGS, THE JAPS HAVE BEEN HITTING THEM NON-STOP ...



A LOW WOODEN BUNKER WAS MOULDED INTO THE CONTOURS OF THE SUMMIT.

THE C.O.-
WHAT'S HE
LIKE?

COLONEL SHARP,
SIR? HE'S A REGULAR
TOUGH NUT. HARDLY EVER
SLEEPS, ALWAYS CHECKIN'
THE DEFENCES. IF IT WASN'T
FOR HIM, I RECKON
THE JAPS WOULD BE
SITTIN' UP HERE
BY NOW...



ROB ENTERED THE COMMAND POST - AND HAD THE IMPRESSION OF GREY, COOL EYES APPRAISING HIM...

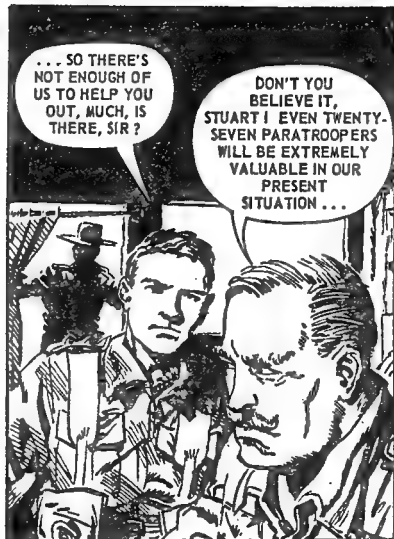
LIEUTENANT
STUART, SEVENTH
GURKHA PARACHUTE
BRIGADE, SIR...

PLEASED TO
HAVE YOU WITH US,
STUART. I SAW THE
WHOLE THING AS YOU
LANDED. I'M SORRY -
THERE WAS NOTHING
WE COULD DO.
WHAT WERE YOUR
LOSSES?

SEVENTY-THREE
MEN, SIR, INCLUDING
ALL OFFICERS EXCEPT
MYSELF.



WHILE THEY WERE SPEAKING, ANOTHER MAN ENTERED THE BUNKER . . .



A THIN, ARROGANT-LOOKING MAJOR SHOOK ROB'S HAND BRIEFLY . . .



THAT'S RIGHT. I WAS IN A CHINDIT UNIT THAT RAN INTO A JAP AMBUSH. ONLY SURVIVOR, IN FACT. I WAS SHOVED INTO A PRISON CAMP, BUT IT WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH TO KEEP ME. I BROKE OUT AND MANAGED TO SLIP THROUGH THE JAP LINES HERE TO HUK HILL ...



COLONEL SHARP GAVE A COUGH ...

THE DAY AFTER HE CAME IN, MY OWN SECOND IN COMMAND WAS KILLED IN A MORTAR ATTACK, SO I NATURALLY MADE FOX MY NUMBER TWO. ANYWAY, TO BUSINESS. COME OVER HERE, BOTH OF YOU ...



A ROUGH SCALE MODEL LAY ON A NEARBY TABLE ...

HUK HILL - A NATURAL FORTRESS. WE'VE BEEN HOLDING IT FOR MORE THAN THREE MONTHS NOW. THANKS TO REGULAR SUPPLY DROPS, WE'VE NO WORRIES ABOUT FOOD OR AMMO - BUT ...



BUT OUR YELLOW FRIENDS OUT THERE ARE DETERMINED TO GET THIS HILL. AND IF THEY KEEP HITTING US HARD, DAY AFTER DAY, WE'RE BOUND TO CRACK SOMEWHERE . . .

THERE'S NO CHANCE OF OUR GROUND FORCES MAKING CONTACT FOR MONTHS. WE'VE JUST GOT TO STICK IT OUT HERE !



STUART, I SAID YOU AND YOUR GURKHAS CAN HELP. FORM THEM INTO AN INDEPENDENT STRIKE FORCE, CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING COUNTER-ATTACKS AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE, ANYWHERE ON HUK HILL.

WITH RESPECT, SIR - STUART HERE HAS ONLY A HANDFUL OF MEN. THEY CAN'T HELP MUCH . . .

ROB TURNED TO MAJOR FOX AND REPLIED COOLLY . . .

SIR, EVERY MAN I'VE GOT IS WORTH FOUR JAPS. YOU'LL SOON SEE HOW MUCH THEY CAN HELP.



ROB SALUTED AND RETURNED TO HIS MEN ...

GET THE MEN
TOGETHER, BANDA.
WE'RE MOVING BACK TO
REAR POSITIONS AS A
SHOCK FORCE. WE'LL BE
KEPT IN RESERVE FOR
EMERGENCIES ...

I HOPE ONE
TURNS UP SOON,
SIR. THE MEN ARE
GETTING RESTLESS -
THEY WANT THEIR CHANCE
TO HIT BACK AT THE
JAPANESE FOR THIS
MORNING.



AS THEY MOVED FARTHER UP THE SLOPE ...

YOU LOOK
WORRIED,
SIR ...

I AM, BANDA.
I STILL CAN'T
FIGURE OUT HOW
THE JAPS KNEW
ABOUT US THIS
MORNING ...





UNLESS
SOMEONE ON
HUK HILL TOLD THEM
- BUT THAT'S
RIDICULOUS...!

NIGHT CAME. ROB AND HIS MEN WERE
POSITIONED ON THE UPPER SLOPES...

TEA,
SIR...?

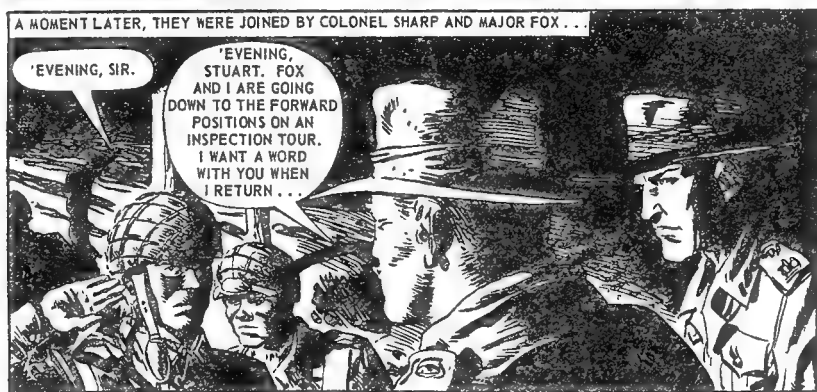
THANKS
BANDA. LOOKS
LIKE BEING A
QUIET NIGHT.



A MOMENT LATER, THEY WERE JOINED BY COLONEL SHARP AND MAJOR FOX...

'EVENING, SIR.

'EVENING,
STUART. FOX
AND I ARE GOING
DOWN TO THE FORWARD
POSITIONS ON AN
INSPECTION TOUR.
I WANT A WORD
WITH YOU WHEN
I RETURN...



ROB AND SERGEANT BANDA WATCHED THE FIGURES DISAPPEAR DOWN THE SLOPE . . .



ROB HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE SECOND-IN-COMMAND, MAJOR FOX, BUT HE KEPT THEM TO HIMSELF. TEN MINUTES LATER, THE TELEPHONE RANG . . .



ROB WENT STRAIGHT ALONG TO THE FORWARD POSITIONS ...

MAJOR - WHAT
HAPPENED ?

WE WERE
RETURNING
FROM AN ADVANCED
POST. A JAP SNIPER
IN THE TREES MUST
HAVE SPOTTED
HIM ...

ROB LOOKED INTO THE MAJOR'S
HATCHET FACE, WHICH SEEMED QUITE
DEVOID OF EMOTION ...

I - I SUPPOSE
YOU'LL BE TAKING OVER
COMMAND NOW ?

YOU SUPPOSE
RIGHT, STUART. I'LL
BE MOVING INTO THE
COLONEL'S BUNKER.
GOODNIGHT.



Chapter 2. **FIX BAYONETS!**

DAWN BROKE OVER HUK HILL. IN THE TRENCHES, EVERY MAN WAS STANDING TO . . .



THE SHRILL CRIES OF THE JAPANESE EVEN REACHED THE UPPER SLOPES OF THE HILL.



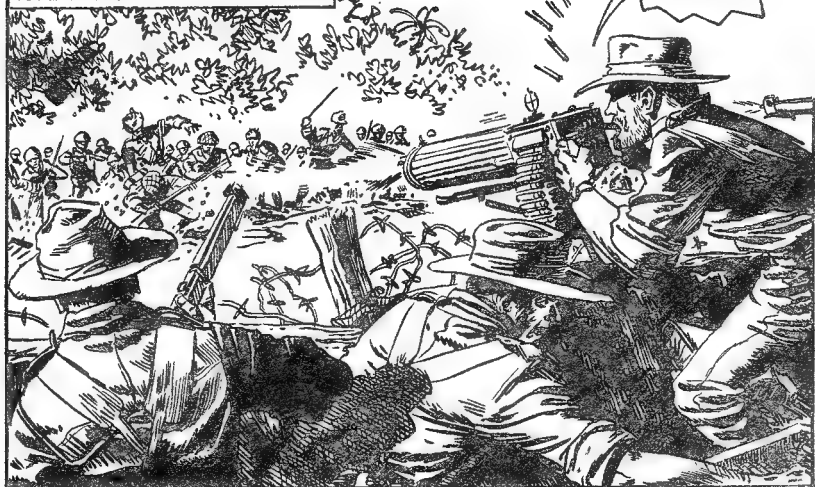
THE ENEMY WERE SIXTY YARDS FROM THE MOST FORWARD DEFENCE LINE WHEN A YOUNG OFFICER SCREAMED AN ORDER...



THE FRONT RANKS OF THE CHARGING JAPANESE WERE CUT DOWN ...



BUT MASSES MORE TOOK THEIR PLACES ...



HIGH ABOVE. ROB WATCHED WITH GROWING ANXIETY . . .



THE JAPS'LL
SWAMP THOSE BOYS!
MAJOR FOX SHOULD
HAVE GIVEN THEM
MORTAR SUPPORT BY
NOW! BANDA, GET ME
THE BATTERY!

POSITIONED ON THE FAR SLOPE, SIX HEAVY MORTARS
WERE HUK HILL'S ONLY DEFENCE SUPPORT . . .



MORTAR
GROUP LEADER.
NO, WE HAVEN'T
RECEIVED ANY
FIRE ORDERS
FROM MAJOR
FOX . . .

WELL, GET
FIRING NOW! WE'VE
GOT TO STOP ANY
MORE WAVES COMING
IN! HURRY - I'LL
GIVE YOU THE
RANGE . . .

EXACTLY SIXTY SECONDS LATER, THE FIRST SHELLS WERE SCREAMING OVER THE CREST TO SMASH INTO THE PACKED JAPANESE.



BUT THE FIRST LINE OF THE ENEMY HAD REACHED THE BRITISH TRENCHES...



ROB STUART WAS ON HIS FEET ...

COME ON, LADS—
WE'RE GOING TO LEND
A HAND DOWN THERE!
FIX BAYONETS!



IN A WILD RUSH, THE YELLING
PARATROOPERS RACED DOWN
THE SLOPE TOWARDS THE
FOREMOST TRENCHES...

AYO GURKHALI!



THEY HIT THE JAPANESE LIKE FURIES...

LOOK,
BOYS - IT'S THE
PARAS!



ROB EMPTIED HIS STEN MAGAZINE INTO
A GROUP OF JAPS AS THE HARD-PRESSED
DEFENDERS RALLIED...

THAT'S IT,
LADS! KICK
THEM OUT!



AND THREE MINUTES LATER ...



WE'VE DONE
IT! LOOK AT
THE BLIGHTERS
RUN!

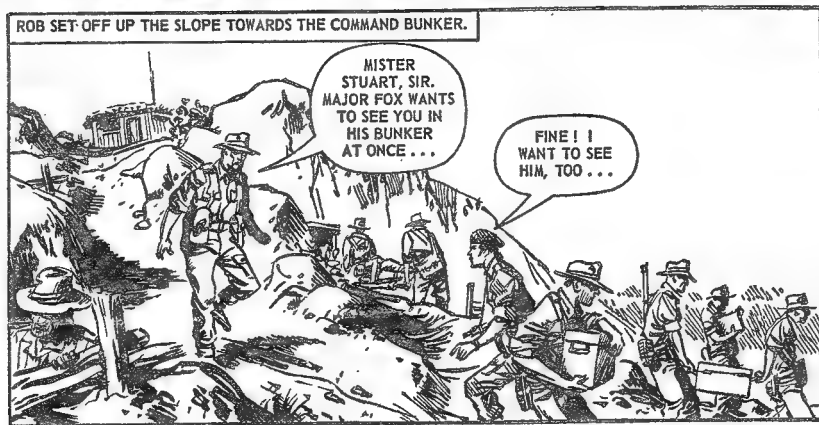
A WEARY WARRANT OFFICER STAGGERED UP ...



YOU - YOU SAVED
OUR BACON, SIR!
I JUST DON'T
UNDERSTAND WHY
THE MORTARS DIDN'T
OPEN UP AS SOON
AS THE ATTACK
STARTED ...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND
EITHER, SERGEANT-MAJOR.
BUT I'M GOING TO
FIND OUT ...

ROB SET OFF UP THE SLOPE TOWARDS THE COMMAND BUNKER.



MISTER
STUART, SIR.
MAJOR FOX WANTS
TO SEE YOU IN
HIS BUNKER
AT ONCE ...

FINE! I
WANT TO SEE
HIM, TOO ...

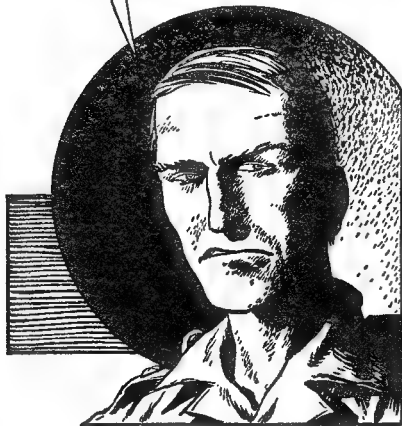
ROB ENTERED THE BUNKER TO FIND A FURIOUS MAJOR FOX AWAITING HIM . . .

MISTER STUART, JUST WHO THE DEVIL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, GIVING THE MORTAR GROUP FIRE ORDERS ?

SIR, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE, THE NORTH POSITIONS WERE BEING OVERRUN !



BECAUSE, MISTER STUART, I BELIEVED THE JAPS WERE UP TO A TRICK THEY'D USED SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE. THAT THE ATTACK WAS MERELY A DIVERSION WHILE A HEAVIER ASSAULT WOULD BE MOUNTED ELSEWHERE, CATCHING US OFF-GUARD . . .



D'YOU THINK I DIDN'T KNOW THAT, STUART ? I WAS WELL AWARE OF THE SITUATION, BUT I DELIBERATELY REFRAINED FROM ORDERING THE MORTARS TO FIRE - AND DO YOU KNOW WHY ?

NO, SIR. WHY ?



ROB TOOK A DEEP BREATH . . .

I SEE, SIR. YOU WERE KEEPING THE MORTARS IN RESERVE - JUST IN CASE ! YOU DIDN'T GIVE A HANG ABOUT WHAT WAS ACTUALLY HAPPENING TO US !

WATCH YOURSELF, LIEUTENANT. AND THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU QUESTION A BATTALION COMMANDER'S STRATEGY AGAIN !



WHITE WITH REPRESSED ANGER, ROB TURNED TO LEAVE - AND FOUND HIMSELF FACE TO FACE WITH A SHORT MAN IN BATTLE DRESS . . .

GOOD GRIEF !
A - A JAP !

WRONG AGAIN,
MISTER STUART ! THE
MAN IS BURMESE - HE'S
MY BATMAN. HE ESCAPED
WITH ME FROM THE PRISON
CAMP. NOW GET OUT
OF HERE . . .

ROB WAS STILL SMOULDERING THAT NIGHT AS HE AND SERGEANT BANDA TOOK A TURN ON LOOKOUT . . .

THE ARROGANT DEVIL !
OKAY, SO HE'S RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE DEFENCE OF HUK HILL,
BUT IT SURELY DOESN'T GIVE
HIM THE RIGHT TO JUST CHUCK
MEN'S LIVES AWAY !

SIR . . .

SERGEANT BANDA WAS STARING INTENTLY
OUT AT THE DARKNESS . . .

WHAT
IS IT,
BANDA ?

I - I THOUGHT
I HEARD SOMETHING
MOVING - JUST OVER
THERE, SIR . . .



THE FLARE BURST - AND NO MAN'S LAND WAS
BATHED IN ITS HARSH GLARE . . .

WHERE DID
THE SOUND COME
FROM, BANDA ?

OVER BY THOSE
SHELL-HOLES, SIR.
I HEARD A SCRAPING
NOISE, AS THOUGH
SOMEONE WAS CRAWLING
TOWARDS THE
JUNGLE . . .



ROB TOOK OUT
A VEREY PISTOL . . .

THIS'LL SHOW
'EM UP IF ANYONE
IS SNOOPING
ABOUT . . .



THE SECONDS PASSED AND THE FLARE BEGAN TO SPLUTTER OUT . . .

I CAN'T SEE
ANYTHING. ANYWAY,
IT'S HARDLY LIKELY
SOMEONE'S GOING TO BE
CRAWLING OUT FROM
OUR LINES.

YOU'RE
RIGHT, SIR. I
MUST HAVE BEEN
MISTAKEN . . .



SOON AFTER, ROB AND BANDA STOOD DOWN. THEY WERE ROUSED FROM SOME MUCH-NEEDED SLEEP
JUST AFTER DAWN . . .

LIEUTENANT !
LIEUTENANT !

WHAT - WHAT
IS IT, LAD ? WHAT'S
THAT NOISE ?

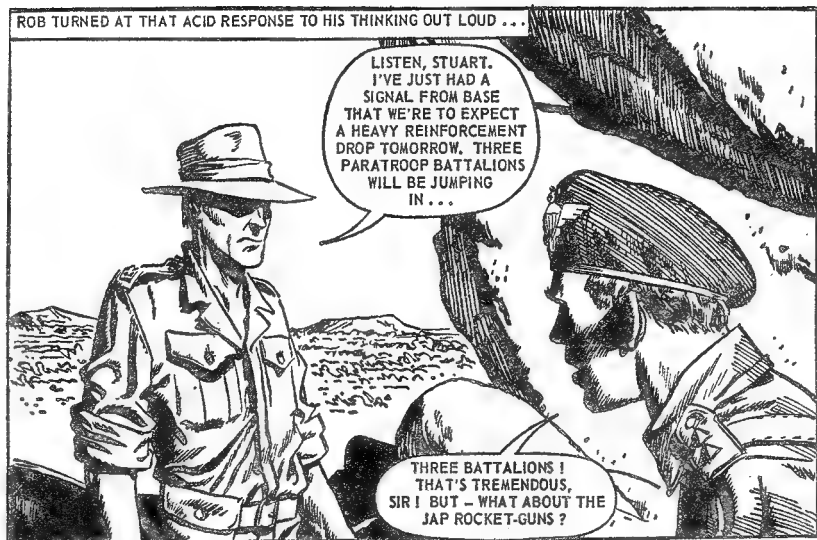




BY THE TIME ROB REACHED THE FAR SLOPES, IT WAS ALL OVER . . .



ROB TURNED AT THAT ACID RESPONSE TO HIS THINKING OUT LOUD ...



FOX NODDED ...



THAT IS CORRECT,
STUART. YOU CLAIM YOUR
GURKHAS ARE TOUGH. LET'S
SEE THEM KNOCK OUT THOSE
ROCKETS - UNLESS, OF COURSE,
YOU'D RATHER I GAVE THE
TASK TO ANOTHER UNIT?



ROB BIT HIS LIP . . .

NO, SIR - MY
MEN AND I WILL DO
IT. WE'LL MOVE
OUT JUST AFTER
MIDNIGHT . . .



00.20 HOURS . . .

BANDA, YOU'VE
CHECKED EVERY MAN
HAS THREE GRENADES?
RIGHT, LET'S GO . . .



Chapter 3.

SUSPICION

LIKE SNAKES THEY SLITHERED ACROSS DARK NO MAN'S LAND. SOON THEY WERE AT THE EDGE OF THE JUNGLE...

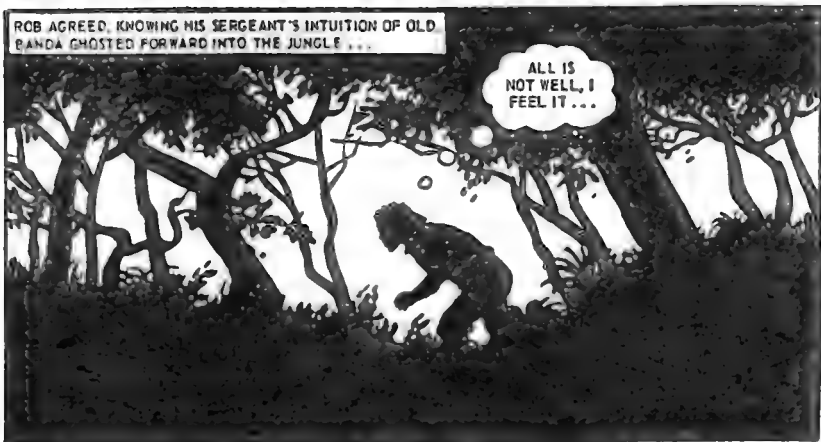
THE BATTERY'S THREE MILES DUE NORTH, IN A CLEARING. WE SHOULD BE THERE IN THIRTY MINUTES...

SIR, I'D LIKE TO MAKE A QUICK SCOUT AHEAD, JUST TO CHECK. CAN YOU GIVE ME TEN MINUTES?



ROB AGREED, KNOWING HIS SERGEANT'S INTUITION OF OLD BANDA GHOSTED FORWARD INTO THE JUNGLE...

ALL IS NOT WELL, I FEEL IT...



THE GURKHA CLIMBED A HIGH TREE AND
PAUSED, HIS KEEN EYES SEARCHING THE
SHADOWS ...



THERE WAS THE FAINT WHISPER OF A HUMAN
VOICE. THEN HE SAW MOVEMENT ...



BANDA SILENTLY RETURNED TO THE GROUND AND CREPT CLOSER TO THE ENEMY ...



THE TEN MINUTES WERE ALMOST UP WHEN HE REACHED THE OTHERS AND TOLD WHAT HE HAD SEEN . . .

WELL DONE, BANDA I
WE'D HAVE WALKED SLAP
INTO THOSE GUNS. IT'S
US THEY'RE WAITING
FOR ALL RIGHT . . .

WHAT
DO WE
DO NOW,
SIR ?

WE'LL DEAL
WITH OUR FRIENDS
AHEAD - THEN WE'LL
PUSH ON FOR THAT
CLEARING. WE'RE GOING
TO CARRY OUT THIS
MISSION IF IT'S
THE LAST THING
WE DO . . .

TWENTY MINUTES PASSED. THE HIDDEN JAPANESE MACHINE-GUNNERS
FIDGETED IMPATIENTLY. THE BRITISH RAIDERS WERE LATE . . .



THEN DEATH SWOOPED OUT OF THE DARKNESS . . .



SIXTY SILENT SECONDS LATER, ROB
STUART'S VOICE SPOKE QUIETLY . . .



THE PARATROOPERS MOVED ON, DEEPER INTO THE JUNGLE. FIFTY MINUTES LATER, THEY WERE OVERLOOKING A LARGE CLEARING.

SIX OF THEM —
AND NOT VERY WELL-
GUARDED, EITHER. BANDA,
TAKE HALF THE MEN AND
CIRCLE ROUND THEM. I'LL
GIVE YOU TWELVE
MINUTES...

WE'LL BE READY,
SIR. WE HIT THEM FROM
ALL SIDES, EH?

EXACTLY TWELVE MINUTES LATER, THE NIGHT WAS SHATTERED BY A CHORUS OF YELLS AS ROB AND HIS MEN SPRANG INTO ACTION...

AYO GURKHALI !



GRENADE AFTER GRENADE WAS FLUNG AT THE GUN-SITES. WITHIN FORTY SECONDS, THE CLEARING WAS ABLAZE...



BY THE TIME SHOCKED JAPANESE SOLDIERS WERE APPEARING ON THE SCENE, ROB'S MEN WERE DISAPPEARING INTO THE DARK JUNGLE . . .

BACK TO
HUK HILL - AND
WE DON'T STOP FOR
ANYTHING !

THEY PLUNGED AT TOP SPEED THROUGH THE JUNGLE
- WITHOUT FURTHER INCIDENT. THIRTY MINUTES
LATER, THEY BROKE FROM COVER AGAIN, BREATHLESS
BUT TRIUMPHANT . . .

THERE'S HUK HILL.
WE MADE IT ! THAT'S
THE LAST TIME ANY
ROCKET HITS US . . .

THE ADVANCE POSTS GAVE A ROUSING CHEER AS THE RAIDERS CAME IN . . .



WEARINESS WAS BEGINNING TO STIFFEN ROB'S LEGS AS HE CLIMBED THE SLOPE. THEN HE SAW THE FIGURES ABOVE HIM . . .



ROB SQUINTED THROUGH THE DARKNESS, TRYING TO MAKE OUT THE EXPRESSION ON FOX'S FACE . . .

YES, MAJOR -
WE WERE ONE
HUNDRED PER CENT
SUCCESSFUL. BUT WE WERE
ALSO LUCKY. I'D LIKE
TO HAVE A WORD
WITH YOU ABOUT
THAT -

I'M SORRY,
STUART - SOME OTHER
TIME I I'VE TOO MUCH
TO DO AT THE MOMENT.
THE DROP'S DUE AT DAWN,
REMEMBER . . .



SIR, THIS IS
IMPORTANT ! I THINK
WE OUGHT TO TALK
ABOUT SOME OF THE
THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN
HAPPENING AROUND
HERE LATELY.

IT'LL KEEP,
STUART ! WE'LL
TALK ABOUT YOUR
THEORIES - AFTER
THE DROP !



ROB SALUTED - AND TURNED BACK DOWN THE SLOPE, AWARE OF THE EYES ON HIS BACK . . .

OKAY, IF
THAT'S THE WAY
YOU WANT IT, MAJOR.
ONCE THE PARATROOP
BATTALIONS ARRIVE, OUR
TROUBLES WILL BE
OVER - AND THEN I
SHALL DO SOME
CHECKING . . .



BACK IN THE TRENCHES, ROB SETTLED DOWN FOR A SHORT SLEEP.

YOUR OFFICER
LOOKS WORRIED, EVEN
WHEN HE'S ASLEEP,
SERGEANT.

FROM WHAT
WE'VE BEEN
THROUGH, HE HAS
A LOT TO WORRY
ABOUT, SIR . . .



IT WAS A MERE SIXTY MINUTES LATER WHEN
ROB WAS AWOKEN BY A SHARP CRY . . .

HALT!

WHAT THE
HECK . . . ?



AS ROB SPRANG TO HIS FEET, SERGEANT BANDA SHATTERED THE NIGHT WITH HIS STEN GUN . . .



THE FIGURE HAD GONE DOWN. ROB AND HIS SERGEANT SPRANG OUT OF THE TRENCH AND RACED TOWARDS IT.





BUT - BUT
WHAT WAS HE DOING
OUT HERE ?

REMEMBER THE
OTHER NIGHT, BANDA -
YOU THOUGHT YOU
HEARD SOMEONE ... ?



YOU - YOU
MEAN HE WAS
GOING OUT TO THE
JAPANESE LINES, SIR ?
THAT HE - HE MUST
HAVE BEEN A
SPY ?

LET'S SEE ...
WHAT MAJOR FOX -
LOOK OUT !

SUDDENLY, THE DARKNESS WAS DIVIDED BY LINES OF FLYING TRACER...

HEAD DOWN,
BANDA ! BACK TO
THE TRENCHES -
QUICKLY !

A black and white comic panel showing a soldier in a trench. He is wearing a helmet and a jacket, and is looking down with a determined expression. The trench is dark and filled with debris. In the background, there are bright flashes of light and smoke, suggesting a battle. The soldier is in the foreground, and the trench extends into the distance.

LUCK WAS WITH THEM...

ONLY JUST MADE IT,
TOO ! THEY'RE LAUNCHING
A BANZAI ATTACK !

GET READY,
EVERYONE !

A black and white comic panel showing a group of soldiers in a trench. They are all looking towards the right with expressions of concern and urgency. The trench is filled with debris and there are bright flashes of light in the background, indicating a Banzai attack. The soldiers are in the foreground, and the trench extends into the distance.

ROB LET THE CHARGING JAPS GET WITHIN FORTY YARDS. THEN . .

OPEN FIRE !



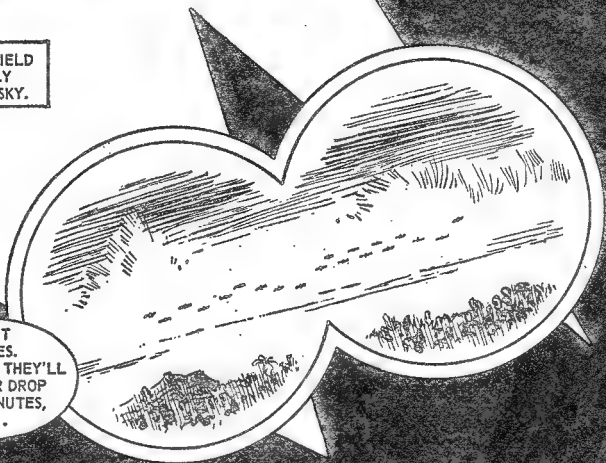
THE ATTACK WITHERED. TWO MORE ATTEMPTED CHARGES WERE BEATEN OFF. THEN IT WAS DAWN ...

DON'T BE FOOLED BY
THE QUIET, BOYS. THE JAPS'LL
HAVE ANOTHER GO SOON -
SO KEEP ALERT ...

MISTER
STUART - HERE
COME THE
PLANES !

ROB GRABBED THE FIELD
GLASSES AND QUICKLY
SCANNED THE GREY SKY.

WHAT A SIGHT
FOR SORE EYES.
TWENTY DAKOTAS ! THEY'LL
BE MAKING THEIR DROP
IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES,
I RECKON ...



AT THAT MOMENT, THERE WAS A SHOUT FROM THE SIGNALLER . . .



ROB LISTENED TENSELY TO THE RAPID BURST OF MORSE ON THE RADIO SET . . .



NEXT INSTANT, ROB WAS RACING FOR THE REAR . . .

SIR ! THE
JAPS ARE COMING
IN AGAIN !

YOU HANDLE
IT, BANDA ! I'VE
GOT SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO !



HE WENT UP THE HILLSIDE LIKE A MADMAN. THE NOISE OF BATTLE WAS GROWING FAINTER AS HE BURST INTO THE COMMAND POST BUNKER . . .

DESERTED !
THERE - THERE'S
NO-ONE HERE . . .



IN TWO LEAPS HE WAS AT THE RADIO TRANSMITTER, DESPERATELY CONTACTING THE DAKOTAS . . .



HELLO,
FLIGHT LEADER !
DO YOU READ ME ?
PROCEED WITH THE
DROP ! FOR PETE'S SAKE,
PROCEED WITH
THE DROP !

LESS THAN THREE MILES AWAY, THE PILOT
AND CO-PILOT OF THE LEAD PLANE STARED
INDECISEVELY AT EACH OTHER . . .



WHAT DO
YOU THINK,
SKIP ?

SOUNDS
SCREWY, DOESN'T
IT ? WHY WOULD
THEY CHANGE THEIR
ORDERS ? I - I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO . . .

ROB HARDLY DARED BREATHE AS HE WAITED FOR THE PILOT'S REPLY. THE SECONDS TICKED PAST ...

PLEASE - YOU'VE
GOT TO GO AHEAD
WITH THE DROP
YOU'VE GOT TO ...



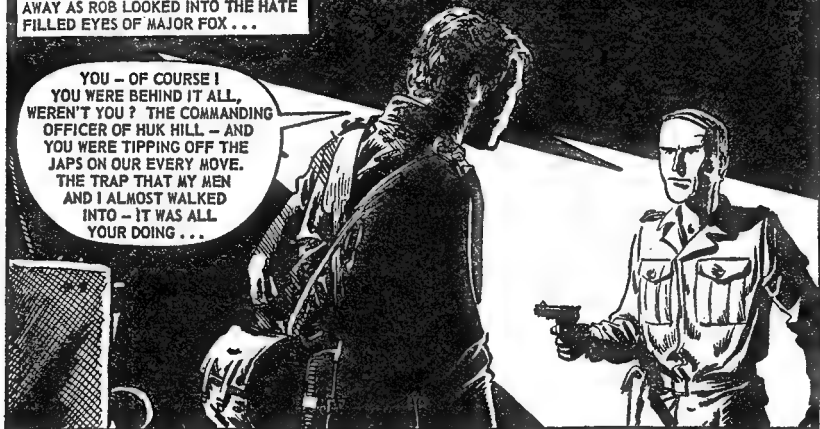
THEN A COLD VOICE CUT THROUGH HIS UNSPOKEN THOUGHTS ...



PUT IT
DOWN, STUART!
THEN TURN ROUND
SLOWLY ...

THE BATTLE SEEMED A MILLION MILES AWAY AS ROB LOOKED INTO THE HATE FILLED EYES OF MAJOR FOX ...

YOU - OF COURSE!
YOU WERE BEHIND IT ALL,
WEREN'T YOU? THE COMMANDING
OFFICER OF HUK HILL - AND
YOU WERE TIPPING OFF THE
JAPS ON OUR EVERY MOVE.
THE TRAP THAT MY MEN
AND I ALMOST WALKED
INTO - IT WAS ALL
YOUR DOING ...



FOX'S FACE WAS LIKE A MASK . . .

YOU WERE DELIBERATELY
INFILTRATED HERE BY THE
JAPS. YOU KILLED COLONEL
SHARP SO YOU COULD TAKE COMMAND
AND DO WHAT YOU LIKED TO WEAKEN US.
THAT BATMAN OF YOURS SLIPPED OUT
TO THE JAPS EVERY NIGHT WITH
YOUR INFORMATION. WHY, FOX ?
WHY DID YOU DO IT ?

SIMPLE !
THE JAPS PROMISED
ME THE EARTH IF I COULD
GET HUK HILL FOR THEM.
AND THEY SHALL HAVE
IT BY TONIGHT . . .

THERE WILL BE A FULL-SCALE ASSAULT
ON THE HILL TONIGHT - AND IT WILL BE
OVERWHELMED ! ONLY THE ARRIVAL
OF YOUR PARATROOP REINFORCEMENTS
COULD PREVENT THIS - BUT I DON'T
THINK THE PILOTS WILL RISK DROPPING
THEM IN ALL THIS CONFUSION . . .

YOU RAT !
YOU FILTHY
TRAITOR !

ALMOST BERSERK WITH RAGE, ROB HURLED HIMSELF AT FOX. HE HARDLY HEARD THE SHOT OR FELT THE RED-HOT PAIN IN HIS SHOULDER AS THE BULLET HIT HIM . . .




BOTH MEN TUMBLED TO THE WOODEN FLOOR OF THE BUNKER, FIGHTING AND SNARLING LIKE WILDCATS . . .



TWO HUNDRED YARDS BELOW, SERGEANT BANDA HAD LAUNCHED A COUNTER-ATTACK. THE FURY OF THE PARATROOPERS' CHARGE TOOK THE JAPS BY SURPRISE . . .

COME ON,
MEN! THEY'RE
BREAKING!



AND, LESS THAN A MILE AWAY, IN THE SKY . . .



COME ON,
SKIP! THOSE
PARATROOPER BOYS
ARE ALL WAITING
BACK THERE! HAVE
YOU DECIDED
WHAT TO DO?

YES - I'VE
DECIDED . . .

IN THE COMMAND POST OF HUK HILL, ROB STUART WAS AVENGING HUNDREDS OF BRITISH LIVES . . .

AAAAGH !

IT'S
FINISHED . . . !

ROB SLOWLY STAGGERED TO THE DOOR OF THE
BUNKER, DESPERATION IN HIS EYES . . .

THE PLANES -
THEY - THEY'VE GOT
TO MAKE THE
DROP - THEY'VE
GOT TO . . .

HE BLINKED AS HE CAME OUT INTO THE STRONG SUNLIGHT – AND LOOKED UP AT THE BLUE SKY. THEN HE SMILED. THE PILOTS HAD DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE DROP ...



THANKS TO THE PARATROOP REINFORCEMENTS, HUK HILL HELD OUT FOR ANOTHER MONTH – AND THEN FORWARD ELEMENTS OF THE BRITISH MAIN ADVANCE BROKE THROUGH TO THEM.

JUST WILLIE'S LUCK

LITTLE WILLIE WADE AND HIS MATES WERE MAKING A PRACTICE JUMP, BEHIND THE LINES IN ITALY . . .



HERE WE GO, WILLIE I SEE YOU ON THE GROUND!

BET I'M THERE BEFORE YOU, CHUM!

WILLIE WAS JOKING. BUT AS HE LEFT THE AIRCRAFT . . .



GRIEF - MY CHUTE'S TANGLED! UNLESS I CAN STRAIGHTEN THE CANOPY I SHALL BORE A HOLE IN THE DECK . . .!

HE HURTLIED DOWN, STRUGGLING WITH HIS RIGGING LINES. THE CANOPY AT LAST OPENED - WITH MERE SECONDS TO SPARE !

OUCH !
GLORY BE ! I
THOUGHT I'D
HAD IT
THEN !

ARE YOU OKAY,
WILLIE ? COR, WHEN
YOU SAID YOU'D RACE ME
DOWN I DIDN'T THINK
YOU MEANT IT !

LAY OFF, MATE,
I'VE HAD ENOUGH JOSES
FOR ONE DAY ! I COULD
HAVE FINISHED UP
IN AUSTRALIA !

THAT NIGHT, THE PARATROPCERS WERE BRIEFED FOR AN OPERATION...

... YOUR OBJECTIVE IS
THE AVELLINI BRIDGE, ON
THE MAIN GERMAN SUPPLY
ROUTE. IT MUST BE
CAPTURED UNDAAGED
TO PROVIDE A ROUTE FOR
OUR ARMOUR !

THE BRIDGE SPANS
A NARROW RAVINE, SO
YOU WILL BE DROPPED TO
THE SOUTH OF IT AND
FIGHT YOUR WAY IN !



AS WILLIE'S TURN CAME TO JUMP, THE DAKOTA LURCHED VIOLENTLY. HE WAS FLUNG BACKWARDS.



THIS TIME WILLIE'S PARACHUTE WORKED PERFECTLY. BUT, AS HE DESCENDED...







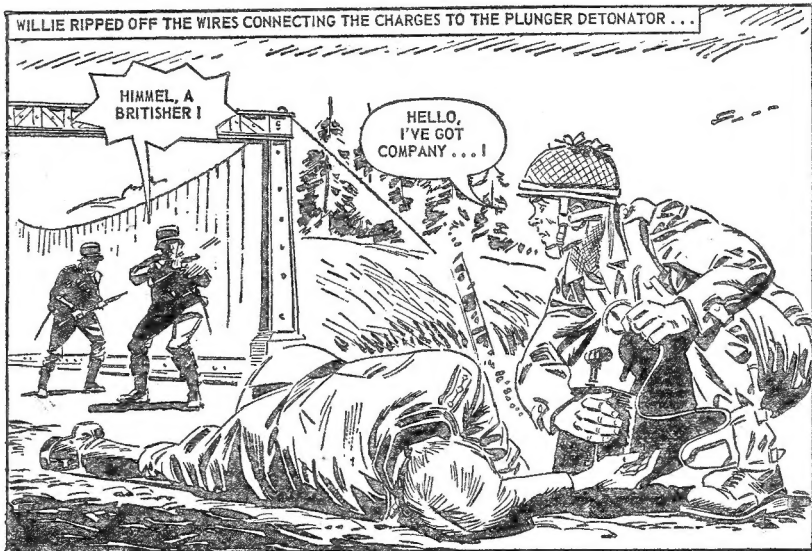
AS THE LAST TANK ROLLED ACROSS THE BRIDGE...



THE GERMAN OFFICER PREPARED TO FIRE HIS CHARGES...



WILLIE RIPPED OFF THE WIRES CONNECTING THE CHARGES TO THE PLUNGER DETONATOR...



THE PARATROOPER GRABBED HIS STEN GUN . . .



TEN MINUTES LATER, THE MAIN PARTY OF BRITISH PARATROOPERS CAUTIOUSLY APPROACHED THE BRIDGE . . .



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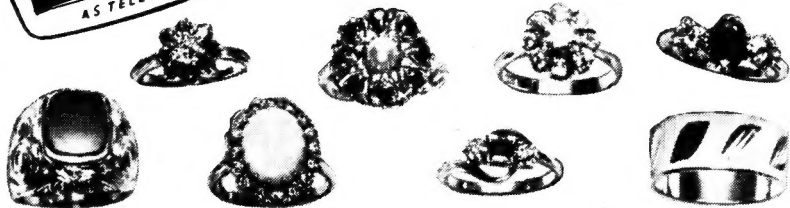
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